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Original Publication Information

Baron, Courtney. "From 'Don't Use It' to 'Let's Edit!': Using Wikipedia to Teach the ARLIS/NA Art, Architecture, and Design Information Competencies." 2020. *Art Documentation: Journal of the Art Libraries Society of North America* 39(2): 219-238.

<https://doi.org/10.1086/711302>

ThinkIR Citation

Baron, Courtney, "From "Don't Use It" to "Let's Edit!": Using Wikipedia to Teach the ARLIS/NA Art, Architecture, and Design Information Competencies" (2020). *Faculty Scholarship*. 775.

<https://ir.library.louisville.edu/faculty/775>

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From “Don’t Use It” to “Let’s Edit!”:

Using Wikipedia to Teach the ARLIS/NA *Art, Architecture, and Design Information Competencies*

Courtney Baron, *University of Louisville USA*

Abstract—Students can develop the research skills outlined in the ARLIS/NA *Art, Architecture, and Design Information Competencies* through the process of editing content on Wikipedia. This article situates the competencies for art and design students within the literature on information literacy and the applications of Wikipedia in the college classroom. With a focus on art history, the art information competencies are mapped to the ACRL *Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education* and implemented in one-shot instruction sessions. Inspired by the success of the Art+Feminism Wikipedia Edit-a-thons, the author demonstrates how art librarians can build upon the success of these events and outreach initiatives to incorporate Wikipedia into information literacy instruction for art history students.

INTRODUCTION

As the world’s most popular free encyclopedia, Wikipedia is often the first resource students consult when starting their research. Although Wikipedia is rarely considered an appropriate source for academic research, librarians can use Wikipedia’s editing process to teach students the core information literacy skills across art, architecture, and design disciplines. Building upon the momentum from the Art+Feminism Wikipedia Edit-a-thons, the author demonstrates how to move beyond these events and outreach initiatives to incorporate Wikipedia into the information literacy classroom. Wikipedia can be an effective platform for teaching disciplinary research concepts to art history students.

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Art Documentation: Journal of the Art Libraries Society of North America, vol. 39 (fall 2020)
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THE ART, ARCHITECTURE, AND DESIGN INFORMATION COMPETENCIES

In June 2018, the Research and Information Services (RISS) section of the Art Libraries Society of North America (ARLIS/NA) published the first update to the *Art, Architecture, and Design Information Competencies* (hereafter *Art Information Competencies*).¹ This report was originally created in 2006 and outlined competencies for nine art disciplines and a skill set for all design learners.² The goal was to offer librarians a set of vetted learning outcomes for providing scaffolded instruction to art, architecture, and design students. At that time, the Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL) 2001 *Information Literacy Competency Standards* (hereafter *Standards*) were the guiding document for instruction librarians, but few discipline-specific guidelines existed.³ When ACRL adopted the *Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education* (hereafter *Framework*) in January 2016, replacing the *Standards*, it marked a shift from traditional bibliographic instruction towards information literacy concepts that can be adapted to any skill level or discipline.⁴ The new ARLIS/NA information competencies were influenced by the *Framework* as well as the 2011 ACRL *Visual Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education* (hereafter *Visual Literacy Competency Standards*), which are being updated at the time of this writing.⁵ The need to update the *Art Information Competencies* was confirmed when the RISS committee members surveyed ARLIS/NA members and found only about 25 percent of the respondents were actively using the competencies in their instruction.⁶ Not only did the competencies need to be updated to reflect the latest professional accreditation standards, but many disciplines such as graphic design and arts administration were missing from the original report. The new competencies reflect the research needs of art students who rely heavily on images, and the competencies can be applied in a variety of settings, such as libraries, inside studios, during critiques, galleries, museums, and of course online. The focus is on critical thinking, using information ethically, and considering the social and community aspects of research.

Just like the *Framework*, the *Art Information Competencies* are intended to be flexible, scaffolded, and adaptable to a variety of teaching situations. In addition to subject-specific competencies, non-disciplinary essential questions can set the stage and

1. Jane Carlin, Linden How, Amanda Meeks, Alan Michelson, Shannon Marie Robinson, James Sobczak, and Alyssa Vincent, *Art, Architecture, and Design Information Competencies*, Art Libraries Society of North America, 2018, <https://www.arlisna.org/publications/arlis-na-research-reports/1469-info-comp-aad>.

2. Jeanne Brown, Jane Carlin, Thomas Caswell, Edith Crowe, Maya Gervis, Susan Lewis, Alan Michelson, Barbara Opar, and Jennifer Parker, *Information Competencies for Students in Design Disciplines*, Art Libraries Society of North America, 2006, <https://www.arlisna.org/publications/arlis-na-research-reports/148-information-competencies-for-students-in-design-disciplines>.

3. ACRL, *Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education*, Association of College & Research Libraries, 2000, <https://alair.ala.org/handle/11213/7668>.

4. ACRL, *Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education*, Association of College & Research Libraries, 2016, <http://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/ilframework>.

5. Denise Hattwig, Joanna Burgess, Kaila Bussert, and Ann Medaille, *ACRL Visual Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education*, Association of College & Research Libraries, 2011, <http://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/visualliteracy>.

6. Linden How, Amanda Meeks, Shannon Marie Robinson, and Alyssa Vincent, "The Art of Information Literacy: New Competencies for Art, Architecture, and Design Learners," *College & Research Libraries News* 80, no. 3 (2019): 166.

empower learners to think through their own creative research process.⁷ Teaching librarians can then work backwards, using the backward design model outlined by Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe to create learning outcomes, brainstorm active learning techniques, and select assessment strategies to design a complete lesson plan.⁸ The competencies are also a living document, with new disciplines being added or updated annually. The competencies can be a powerful tool for librarians to pave the way for conversations with art and design faculty and support the research needs of students. In addition, the information competencies are transferrable, helping students to translate the research skills they have learned in the classroom and studio to being information literate in real-world scenarios.

USING THE FRAMEWORK AND ART INFORMATION COMPETENCIES IN ART AND DESIGN INSTRUCTION

Since the publication of the original *Art Information Competencies* in 2006, there have been several examples of how art librarians have had success using the competencies, as well as the *Framework* and *Visual Literacy Competency Standards*, to provide information literacy instruction for art and design students. In 2011, Rina Vecchiola shared how the *Art Information Competencies* were used to integrate information literacy instruction into the architecture program at Washington University in St. Louis.⁹ The *Art Information Competencies* provided guidance for librarians collaborating with faculty on discipline-specific information literacy instruction. In 2017, Amanda Meeks et al. adapted the *Framework* to studio art disciplines through CREATE, a tool based on knowledge practices and dispositions to provide research assistance and instruction to studio art students.¹⁰ CREATE stands for Conversation, Revision, Exploration, Authority, Thoughtful, and Experiential, highlighting the parallels between the research process and the creative process.¹¹ The CREATE framework became a predecessor to the new *Art Information Competencies*, and some of the authors were involved in the recent revision. In 2017, Stephanie Beene and Shannon Robinson mapped the *Visual Literacy Competency Standards* to the *Framework* as a guideline for designing instruction for art and architecture students.¹² The result reveals the research needs of art and architecture students and provides a disciplinary lens for information literacy instruction.

7. How, Meeks, Robinson, and Vincent, “The Art of Information Literacy,” 167.

8. Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe, *Understanding by Design* (Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2004), cited in ACRL, *Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education*.

9. Rina Vecchiola, “Using ARLIS/NA Information Competencies for Students in Design Disciplines in Course Integrated Information Literacy Instruction at Washington University in St. Louis,” *Art Documentation* 30, no. 1 (Spring 2011): 74–78.

10. Amanda Meeks, Larissa Garcia, Ashley Peterson, and Alyssa Vincent, “CREATE: Adapting the Framework to Studio Art Disciplines,” *College & Research Libraries News* 78, no. 10 (2017): 554.

11. Meeks, Garcia, Peterson, and Vincent, “CREATE,” 555.

12. Stephanie Beene and Shannon Marie Robinson, “When Research Does Not Start with a Question: Teaching with the Framework and Visual Literacy Standards within Art and Architecture Librarianship,” *Art Documentation* 36, no. 2 (Fall 2017): 254–80.

Researching the literature on the application of the *Art Information Competencies* to information literacy instruction reveals gaps in the conversation. Since the competencies were updated in 2018, not much has been published on their incorporation in the classroom. In addition, much of the research on information literacy instruction in art disciplines focuses on studio and design students. This article focuses instead on the art history information competencies for both novice and expert learners.

ART INFORMATION COMPETENCIES FOR ART HISTORY

As outlined in the *Art Information Competencies*, the history of art is an interdisciplinary field, involving the study of global cultures, historical figures and movements, and geographical regions in addition to significant artworks and influential artists. These broad explorations are accompanied by specialized knowledge about physical objects, digital media and image reproductions, foreign languages, and creative studio practices. Art history research is based on historical and primary sources, including works of art, and scholarly works such as print monographs and peer-reviewed journal articles. Increasingly, image repositories and freely available internet sources are playing a key role in the research process. The *Art Information Competencies* outlines a set of information competencies for both novice and expert researchers. The competencies are divided into two sections—novice and expert—and indicate what learners at these levels should be able to do and comprehend.¹³

The *Art Information Competencies* do not formally define novice and expert learners, but the author uses these terms to distinguish between lower-level undergraduate students (novice) and upper-level undergraduate through graduate level students (expert). Novice learners are able to differentiate between primary and secondary as well as scholarly and popular sources and recognize the merits of each for research in art history. They are able to conduct searches using keywords based on disciplinary vocabulary and understand how art history sources are organized and structured inside the library. Novice learners are able to assess, select, describe, and analyze visual materials and images and integrate these sources into the research process. They are able to develop a topic appropriate for the research assignment and survey the interpretations and ideas in the scholarly literature. Novice learners are able to incorporate scholarship from related disciplines, such as history, archaeology, religion, and philosophy. They are able to avoid plagiarism by tracking citations and giving proper attribution. Novice learners are aware of the key disciplinary resources for their research topic, know how to use a variety of source types including exhibition catalogs and catalogues raisonnés, and understand how information is structured and valued through classification systems and peer review. They are also aware of how to access a variety of visual materials, grasp the materials and processes used to create the works of art they are studying, and understand the impact of the internet and digital stewardship on art history.¹⁴

13. Carlin et al., *Art, Architecture, and Design Information Competencies*, 17–18.

14. Carlin et al., *Art, Architecture, and Design Information Competencies*, 18–19.

Expert learners are able to locate research collections beyond their local institutions and libraries, accessing the sources needed to complete a literature review which synthesizes arguments and recognizes authorities in the field with attention to disciplinary, historical, and cultural constructions of expertise. They are able to use specialized sources such as auction catalogs to determine authenticity and value of artworks. Expert learners understand copyright and its relation to public domain works, open access repositories, and creative commons licensed images. They have the skills to manage information and share scholarship in a digital space. Expert learners demonstrate curiosity and adaptability when conducting scholarly and visual research. They know where to find career information related to the field of art history. They are aware of established interpretations of artworks, underrepresented voices in the discipline, and gaps in art historical scholarship. Expert learners are aware of how their perspectives on art historical topics and contributions to the discipline may influence future interpretation. Expert learners know advanced research tools and techniques that can synthesize information and find gaps in the literature. They are aware of multimedia platforms for presenting scholarship and the impact of format on its perceived value. Expert learners know how to navigate the ethical and legal issues regarding intellectual property and fair use of visual materials.¹⁵

The *Art Information Competencies* provide librarians with a disciplinary lens to teach information literacy to art, architecture, and design students. Since the study of art history relies on a variety of research strategies and information sources, including the movement toward freely available online sources, there is a ripe opportunity for engagement with Wikipedia. Art librarians will find Wikipedia to be an effective tool for teaching and reinforcing both general research skills and the subject-specific concepts outlined in the art history competencies.

WIKIPEDIA AND INFORMATION LITERACY

As one of the top ten most-visited websites in the United States, according to Alexa, Wikipedia is often the first resource students consult when starting their research, despite discouragement from faculty in favor of scholarly, peer-reviewed sources.¹⁶ Wikipedia’s negative reputation in the academic community and its association with untrustworthy and inaccurate information is not entirely unfounded. The free, open source encyclopedia was launched in 2001 by Jimmy Wales and Larry Sanger.¹⁷ It is a crowd-sourced project, which means anyone has the ability to contribute information and edit existing articles. Though hosted by the Wikimedia Foundation, its content and policies are driven by a community of “Wikipedians,” or editors who volunteer their time to write and improve Wikipedia articles.¹⁸ Since these editors are anonymous, their educational background, level of subject expertise, and overall credibility

15. Carlin et al., *Art, Architecture, and Design Information Competencies*, 19–20.

16. Alexa Internet, “Top Sites in United States,” accessed June 21, 2020, <https://www.alexa.com/topsites/countries/US>.

17. Wikipedia, “History of Wikipedia,” accessed March 1, 2020, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Wikipedia.

18. Wikipedia, “Wikipedia: Wikipedians,” accessed February 28, 2020, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Wikipedians>.

are unknown. The early stages of creating Wikipedia were driven by the need for content without much attention to accuracy and validity. However, in the last several years, Wikipedia has shifted from a focus on quantity to the quality of its content. Though not a reliable source for academic research, Wikipedia has made strides to increase the accuracy and quality of its content. New contributions must meet a set of established criteria, known as the “five pillars,” including support from at least two verifiable sources.¹⁹

These five pillars, first introduced in 2005, serve as the guiding principles of creating and modifying content on Wikipedia. The first is “Wikipedia is an encyclopedia.”²⁰ It is intended to be a compendium of verifiable knowledge and a starting point for further research. It is not a newspaper and is not appropriate for original research showing a new analysis or interpretation. All information must come from previously published, reliable sources such as books, scholarly journal articles, magazines, and newspapers. The content must be synthesized for a general audience from these sources and include citations and references. The second is “Wikipedia is written from a neutral point of view.”²¹ It is not intended as a soapbox for personal ideas or opinions, especially for controversial topics. Articles must be written in a way that represents all major points of view fairly and without bias to fully characterize the information and issues. The third is “Wikipedia is free content that anyone can use, edit, and distribute.”²² Not only can anyone access Wikipedia, except in certain countries where it is banned or censored, but everyone has the ability to contribute. Editors do not own articles, so they can be vigorously used, edited, and redistributed. The fourth is “Wikipedia’s editors should treat each other with respect and civility.”²³ Wikipedia editors should always communicate with respect and assume good faith in others. Talk pages are provided for behind the scenes discussion and debate, but these conversations should never disrupt Wikipedia for users. The fifth is “Wikipedia has no firm rules.”²⁴ Wikipedia is constantly evolving and adapting and recognizes that content and adaptation can evolve over time. This is why editors are encouraged to be “bold” and go for it.²⁵ Wikipedia itself states that it is a work in progress, and perfection is not required.²⁶ Incomplete articles can evolve into well-written and comprehensive articles due to its collaborative editing process. Since their implementation in the process of editing Wikipedia, these five pillars have dramatically improved the quality of the content on Wikipedia. It is difficult for edits that are biased, malicious, unverifiable, or plagiarized to “stick” on Wikipedia because these changes tend to be removed quickly.

19. Wikipedia, “Wikipedia: Five Pillars,” accessed March 1, 2020, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Five_pillars.

20. Wikipedia, “Wikipedia: Wikipedia is an Encyclopedia,” accessed March 1, 2020, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Wikipedia_is_an_encyclopedia.

21. Wikipedia, “Wikipedia: Neutral Point of View,” accessed March 1, 2020, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Neutral_point_of_view.

22. Wikipedia, “Wikipedia: Copyrights,” accessed March 1, 2020, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Copyrights>.

23. Wikipedia, “Wikipedia: Civility,” accessed March 1, 2020, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Civility>.

24. Wikipedia, “Wikipedia: Policies and Guidelines,” accessed March 1, 2020, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Policies_and_guidelines.

25. Wikipedia, “Be Bold,” accessed June 21, 2020, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Be_bold.

26. Wikipedia, “Editing Policy,” accessed June 21, 2020, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Editing_policy.

It is easy to see just how far Wikipedia has come. Users who have registered accounts can see the entire revision history of each page on Wikipedia. As an example, the page for Frida Kahlo was first created on December 28, 2002. The original article, at just 172 words, was the length of a short paragraph. There were no citations or mentions of specific artworks.²⁷ Contrast this with the Frida Kahlo article that exists today (on March 1, 2020) that has several sections covering the following topics: artistic career, style and influences, personal life, posthumous recognition and “Fridamania,” solo exhibitions, references, and external links.²⁸ There are numerous images of Frida and her works and over 290 citations, including references from scholarly, peer-reviewed works. A novice researcher interested in writing a paper about Frida Kahlo would find this article an adequate starting point. The student could look at the sub-headings for ideas on narrowing the focus of the topic to something more specific, such as the symbolism and iconography in Kahlo’s self-portraits. The student could also browse the article for related keywords to use in strategic searching of the library’s databases. The references and citations at the end of the article provide a starting point for further research, including academic, peer-reviewed literature. Wikipedia therefore becomes a bridge to discovering library resources on the research topic. According to a 2013 study, 98 percent of the undergraduates at a large midwestern public research university reported using Wikipedia during their research process.²⁹ While librarians should never encourage students to cite Wikipedia articles in lieu of academic and other disciplinary resources, ignoring Wikipedia in the information literacy classroom does students a disservice. Instead, librarians should teach students how to use a resource they are already comfortable using in a more effective way.

Wikipedia can play a powerful role in helping students transition from information consumers to information producers. Writing and editing Wikipedia articles showcases the research process, requiring students to understand how information is created, ask questions to identify information gaps, use strategic searching techniques to find information, evaluate the authority of information, properly use and cite sources, and even connect with other researchers. Through the Wiki Education organization, Wikipedia connects with higher education institutions to improve the quality of articles and expand access to knowledge. Wikipedia provides an excellent platform for teaching students how information is created, disseminated, and used. Perhaps the greatest benefit is that students really enjoy the process of editing Wikipedia because, unlike writing a research paper that most likely only their professor will read, Wikipedia offers a platform for making their writing and research not only public, but also available for editing and criticism. Students become invested in the process, are motivated to do well, and gain a sense of authorship due to the public application of their research.

27. Wikipedia, “Frida Kahlo,” December 28, 2002, accessed February 28, 2020, https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Frida_Kahlo&oldid=543278.

28. Wikipedia, “Frida Kahlo,” last revised February 26, 2020, accessed February 28, 2020, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frida_Kahlo.

29. Kyung-Sun Kim, Sei-Ching Joanna Sin, and EunYoung Yoo-Lee, “Undergraduates’ Use of Social Media as Information Sources,” *College & Research Libraries* 75, no. 4 (2014): 442–57.

ART + FEMINISM WIKIPEDIA EDIT-A-THONS

According to a 2011 survey, fewer than 10 percent of the contributors to Wikipedia were female, which meant the content was (and still is) skewed due to the lack of female participants.³⁰ Moreover, in an exploration of Wikipedia's gender imbalance, researchers showed female editors were more likely to get their edits reverted than male editors.³¹ Art+Feminism, a nonprofit organization, set out to change that. The first Art+Feminism Wikipedia Edit-a-thon was held in 2014 at the Museum of Modern Art in New York and drew over six hundred people from thirty-one locations who created and improved 101 new articles.³² The movement was born from a conversation among the four founding organizers: Siân Evans, Jacqueline Mabey, Michael Mandiberg, and Laurel Ptak.³³ Inspired by information activism in the realm of gender politics on the web, the organizers had a mission to raise awareness and bridge the gender inequity on Wikipedia and to get artists, art historians, and researchers involved in creating and improving articles on women artists.³⁴ The goal of Art+Feminism Wikipedia Edit-a-thons is "two-fold and symbiotic: to close the gender gap in both content and participation on Wikipedia."³⁵ Today, over 14,000 people have participated in over 1,100 Art+Feminism events around the world and improved more than 58,000 Wikipedia articles, making it the largest Edit-a-thon in Wikipedia history.³⁶ The work is not done, however. In a 2015 article, the founders expressed the need for the project to expand and emphasized the fundamental role art librarians can play in their work as subject specialists and experts in image copyright.³⁷

The author has hosted Art+Feminism Wikipedia Edit-a-thons for the past five years, starting in 2015 at the University of Georgia's Visual Resources Center (now the Art Library) in the Lamar Dodd School of Art. Motivated by the desire to provide faculty, students, and community members with the resources and tools to improve the coverage of underrepresented artists on Wikipedia, the author continued hosting Art+Feminism Wikipedia Edit-a-thons at Emory University's Oxford College Library, where they were employed from January 2016 to July 2019 as the head of teaching and outreach services. The college, a liberal arts school situated within a research university, is home to around 1,000 FTE students on a residential campus. The close proximity to students meant it was easy to form a connection with ReVision, the student feminist organization, whose members were invested in improving the coverage of women on Wikipedia. Oxford College Library and ReVision partnered on several

30. Wikimedia Foundation, *Wikipedia Editors Study: Results from the Editor Survey*, April 2011, http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/5/51/Editor_Survey_Report_April_2011.pdf.

31. Shyong (Tony) K. Lam, Anuradha Uduwage, Zhenhua Dong, Shilad Sen, David R. Musicant, Loren Terveen, and John Riedl, "WP:Clubhouse?: An Exploration of Wikipedia's Gender Imbalance," in *Proceedings of the 7th International Symposium on Wikis and Open Collaboration (WikiSym '11)* (New York: ACM, 2011): 1–10.

32. Siân Evans, Jacqueline Mabey, and Michael Mandiberg, "Editing for Equality: The Outcomes of the Art+ Feminism Wikipedia Edit-a-thons," *Art Documentation* 34, no. 2 (Fall 2015): 194.

33. Evans, Mabey, and Mandiberg, "Editing for Equality," 195–96.

34. Evans, Mabey, and Mandiberg, "Editing for Equality," 197.

35. Evans, Mabey, and Mandiberg, "Editing for Equality," 201.

36. Art+Feminism, "About Art+Feminism," accessed March 1, 2020, <https://www.artandfeminism.org/>.

37. Evans, Mabey, and Mandiberg, "Editing for Equality," 203.

Art+Feminism Wikipedia Edit-a-thon events. The 2018 Art+Feminism Edit-a-thon was covered by *The Oxford Spokesman*, the student newspaper at Oxford College. Nikita Rednam, president of ReVision, described the event: "I think it was important for a lot of people to attend this event because women are very underrepresented on many sources of media, and I think it was a really great initiative that we were able to give them the recognition they deserve."³⁸ Wikipedia Edit-a-thons had a high impact on the success of Oxford College Library's events and outreach program. Through hosting Wikipedia Edit-a-thon events, the author eventually connected students editing Wikipedia with teaching and reinforcing key research concepts. In addition to hosting Edit-a-thon events, the author encourages art librarians to redirect how they have conversations about Wikipedia with faculty and students and to expand these efforts to incorporate Wikipedia into the art history classroom.

WIKIPEDIA IN THE ART HISTORY CLASSROOM

At the 2018 Art+Feminism Wikipedia Edit-a-thon, the author had a conversation with an art history faculty member about the success of these events at Oxford College, including observations that the editing process seemed to reinforce many of the research concepts students need to learn. This led to a collaboration on the creation and implementation of a scaffolded research assignment in the Art 102 course. This course, a survey of art and architecture from the Renaissance through the early twentieth century, was focused on the traditional canon of art history, highlighting the artworks that exemplified the philosophical and aesthetical concepts that shaped Western culture in relation to the socioeconomic and political developments in Europe and the United States during this time period. This meant the course focused mainly on the works by white, male artists. To give students a chance to learn about the contributions of women to the history of art from the Renaissance to the twentieth century, the faculty member and the author decided to create a research assignment and hold an in-class Wikipedia Edit-a-thon focused on women artists.

The assignment was intended to be an alternative to the traditional research paper. As the first instruction session, the author attended the class period when the instructor introduced the assignment and gave a presentation about the history of the Art+Feminism organization and the impact of the associated Wikipedia Edit-a-thons. The author shared Oxford's success as a college participating in this international effort to improve the coverage of women artists on Wikipedia. The class learned how the gender disparity of editors, who are mostly male, greatly slants the content on Wikipedia. Students, who have the privilege of being able to access and use scholarly and subscription resources, were encouraged to share their research on women artists to Wikipedia.

The Wikipedia research assignment was staggered throughout the semester with the intention of scaffolding the information literacy instruction. Students were assigned

38. Tommy Kreutz, "Closing the Wikipedia Gender Gap," *The Oxford Spokesman*, March 23, 2018, accessed February 28, 2020, <https://oxfordspokesman.com/stories/student-life/2018/03/23/closing-the-wikipedia-gender-gap/> (site discontinued).

to groups and asked to select a woman artist from the time period of the class. Next, students had to work with their group members to research and write a proposal stating which artist and corresponding Wikipedia page they selected and why the page needed to be updated. Students had to choose an artist who already had an existing Wikipedia page since it is easier to make substantial edits than to create a page from scratch. In addition, reviewing an existing Wikipedia article meant students had to evaluate the page and identify knowledge and content gaps. The proposals were essential to the success of the project since students had to think critically about their chosen artist and identify gaps in the content of the article. It also prevented student groups from selecting the same artist, which would have resulted in multiple editors working on the same Wikipedia page in real time. The professor and the author reviewed the proposals, gave feedback and suggestions where necessary, and helped the students finalize their artist selections.

Once their groups determined their artists and had their proposals approved, they were ready to begin the research process. The author created a research guide complete with selections from the library catalog, suggested databases and journal titles, credible websites, and image resources. The guide also had information and resources about editing Wikipedia. Students used this guide to start their searches. The second instruction session was workshop-style, in which students were tasked with working in their groups to find sources about their artists. During class, students asked several questions about the research process. The professor and the author used this as an opportunity to address information literacy concepts and show how to navigate discipline-specific resources, such as Oxford Art Online, to find biographical information and references on their artists. This was more effective than giving a general overview of sources and the nature of doing research to the class because students were able to ask questions at the point of need. Since they were tasked with adding information about their artists to Wikipedia, they learned how to proceed with research when they do not have Wikipedia as a starting point. The process also allowed the author to connect with the student groups and develop rapport as their librarian, which led to many groups scheduling research consultations later in the semester.

The third instruction session focused on introducing the editorial side of Wikipedia to the students. The students were instructed to create their Wikipedia account ahead of time since Wikipedia limits the number of accounts that can be created in a single session. Though working in groups, students were instructed to create their own account so their individual contributions could be tracked. Once students were logged into their accounts, they learned the basics of editing, formatting, and citing sources. Students were introduced to the anatomy of a Wikipedia article, including the article and talk pages and read, edit, and view history tabs. The article page is what users see when they access content on Wikipedia. The talk page functions as a space for editors to debate the content and discuss improvements to Wikipedia entries.³⁹ The view history tab allows editors to explore the entire history of a Wikipedia article, including each version since its creation date. Wikipedia provides two options in the edit tab:

39. Wikipedia, "Help: Talk Pages," accessed February 28, 2020, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Help:Talk_pages.

wikitext, which uses the wiki-markup language, and the Visual Editor.⁴⁰ While the wikitext environment gives editors full control of formatting, novice editors will find the Visual Editor easiest to use since they are able to see what the text will look like once it is published. Since Wikipedia requires edits to be supported by verifiable references, there are mechanisms to cite books, articles, websites, and other sources used to write or expand articles. The easiest method is the ref Toolbar, which can be used to fill in bibliographic data from sources to create properly formatted citations.⁴¹ In addition to adding textual content and citations to the article, the process of adding images and other media was particularly essential for an art history course. Wikipedia operates its Wikimedia Commons as a collection of freely usable media files to which, just like the main Wikipedia sites, anyone can contribute. Images can be uploaded as long as they are in the public domain, associated with a free-use license, or fall under the guidelines of fair use.⁴² The instruction in the mechanics of contributing to Wikipedia was intended to prepare students for the research and editing they would be expected to do during the in-class Edit-a-thon.

After several weeks of research, students were ready for their in-class Edit-a-thon, which counted as the fourth session for the class. The professor and the author agreed to do the editing of Wikipedia in class in order to track student contributions through the Wiki Education dashboard.⁴³ Since the process of contributing to Wikipedia is not always intuitive, this allowed students to get help during the editing process. The groups were instructed to come to class with their research and a list of edits they wanted to make to the articles. The edits could include adding citations and references, uploading images of the artists and their artwork, linking to related articles on Wikipedia, editing text for clarity, adding biographical information on the artists, adding a list of artworks and/or exhibition information, and making substantial edits to the content of the articles. Students were instructed to make one change at a time, since it is a best practice to describe each edit when saving changes. This also requires students to accompany each edit with a citation for verification purposes. Since it updates continuously, students found it exciting and motivating to track their progress via the Wiki Education dashboard for the Art 102 class. The dashboard was imperative for assessment purposes as well, since the professor and author could see the overall work and effort of the students. The twenty-nine student editors contributed to a total of ten articles with 308 total edits, 13,200 words added, and twelve uploads of media to the Wikipedia Commons.⁴⁴ The articles that were improved include those about Pilar Albarracín, Mariette Lydis, Nicole Awai, Rosa Mayreder, Berthe Morisot, Nancy

40. Wikipedia, “Wikipedia: Tutorial/Editing,” accessed February 28, 2020, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Tutorial/Editing>.

41. Wikipedia, “Wikipedia:Tutorial/Citing Sources,” accessed February 28, 2020, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Help:Talk_pages.

42. Wikimedia, “Wikipedia: Uploading Images,” accessed February 28, 2020, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Uploading_images.

43. Wiki Education, “My Dashboard,” accessed March 1, 2020, <https://dashboard.wikiedu.org/>.

44. Wikipedia, “Art 102 Wikipedia Edit-a-thon,” accessed March 1, 2020, [https://outreachdashboard.wmflabs.org/courses/Oxford_College_of_Emory_University/Art_102_Wikipedia_Edit-a-thon_\(March_29,_2018\)](https://outreachdashboard.wmflabs.org/courses/Oxford_College_of_Emory_University/Art_102_Wikipedia_Edit-a-thon_(March_29,_2018)).

Elizabeth Prophet, Melissa Sweet (illustrator), and Janet Sobel. The articles on Jackson Pollock and Frida Kahlo were also minimally edited for demonstration purposes.

In this assignment, students not only developed discipline-specific research skills through the process of editing articles on Wikipedia but were tasked with critically evaluating Wikipedia articles to identify gaps and address uneven attention to specific artists and art topics. The process of editing Wikipedia also provided immediate feedback on crucial research concepts. For example, students learned best practices for adding images and other visual media to the Wikimedia Commons. Wikipedia only accepts “freely licensed” images. In other words, editors can upload only those works they have created entirely themselves, works in which they have explicit permission from the creator or copyright owner (such as those with Creative Commons licenses), or works that are in the public domain.⁴⁵ Nevertheless, many students still attempted to upload works they found on websites or through a Google image search. As they went through the process of uploading the images to Wikimedia Commons, they quickly became stuck when they realized the work was not in the public domain, and they could not provide permission from the copyright holder. This presented an opportunity to reinforce the concept of “Information Has Value” from the *Framework* as well as the art history competency in which novice learners are able to “integrate and attribute visual material through their research processes and outputs” from the *Art Information Competencies*. The author facilitated a discussion about the ethical and legal issues surrounding the fair use of visual materials and why Wikipedia had such stringent requirements for new media additions. Once students fully grasped Wikimedia Commons’ expectations for image uploads, they adjusted their searches to limit by Creative Commons licensed- or free-to-share works. In cases where students were unable to add their desired images to their articles due to lack of permission, they were encouraged to think about how the systems that produce and disseminate information affect what they can share or replicate online.⁴⁶

Based on student enthusiasm for this assignment and their demonstrable understanding of the research process, the professor shifted the discussion of Wikipedia in the classroom from “don’t use it!” to “let’s edit it!” Although originally the author was excited by the application of editing Wikipedia to teaching and learning the six threshold concepts in the *Framework*, mapping the *Art Information Competencies* to the *Framework* provides the necessary connection with discipline-specific vocabulary and scaffolded skills when working with art students.

MAPPING THE FRAMEWORK TO THE ART INFORMATION COMPETENCIES

When the *Art Information Competencies* were updated in 2018, they were influenced by the focus on metaliteracies, including visual and media literacies, the 2016 *Framework*,

45. Wikimedia, “What Can I Upload to Wikimedia Commons?,” accessed February 28, 2020, https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/b/bb/Licensing_tutorial_en.svg.

46. ACRL, *Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education*, 17.

and the 2011 *Visual Literacy Competency Standards*.⁴⁷ When drafting the new version of the *Art Information Competencies*, the committee focused on the following pedagogical goals in higher education: “critical thinking, effective communication, familiarity with diverse fields of knowledge and the ability to make connections, solid understanding of the selected field of study, and understanding diversity and inclusion and the impact on selected field of study.”⁴⁸ The final product was not intended to be a comprehensive document, but rather one that lends itself to adaptability and flexibility. The *Art Information Competencies* offer a disciplinary complement to the six threshold concepts in the *Framework*. The *Art Information Competencies* are bound by a list of essential questions and grouped by discipline. The division of the discipline-specific competencies into novice and expert learners affords librarians the ability to scaffold instruction across multiple levels. However, unlike the *Framework* or the *Visual Literacy Competency Standards*, the *Art Information Competencies* are not grouped into categories. This results in a challenge when writing about teaching the competencies in the information literacy classroom.

To ease the process of describing how librarians can teach the art history competencies through the process of editing Wikipedia, the author opted to map the *Art Information Competencies* to the *Framework* (see Table 1). This process illuminated how the research concepts presented in the *Art Information Competencies* are divided among novice and expert learners (see Table 2). For example, the frame Scholarship as Conversation does not apply explicitly to the art history competencies for novice learners, but instead is represented approximately five times in the art history competencies for expert learners. The shift from novice to expert learner is marked by a mastery of the Scholarship as Conversation concept, in which art historians are expected not only to synthesize findings and draw conclusions from scholarly literature, but also to contribute to the discipline through scholarly output and engage in the current professional conversation.⁴⁹ This further illustrates the applications of editing Wikipedia to teaching and learning the art history competencies. Contributing to Wikipedia can be an excellent way for students to practice disseminating their research and exposing their findings to a public audience.

TEACHING THE ART INFORMATION COMPETENCIES THROUGH EDITING WIKIPEDIA

Due to its conceptual nature, the *Framework* can present a challenge for librarians teaching information literacy, especially in one-shot instruction sessions. This can be amplified for art librarians who intend to equip students not only with basic research skills, but with the disciplinary skills outlined in the *Art Information Competencies*. Using Wikipedia in the classroom to achieve these goals is a natural fit for art librarians due to the momentum from Art+Feminism’s international effort. These events and outreach initiatives can assist librarians when making connections with

47. Carlin et al., *Art, Architecture, and Design Information Competencies*, 3.

48. Carlin et al., *Art, Architecture, and Design Information Competencies*, 4.

49. Carlin et al., *Art, Architecture, and Design Information Competencies*, 19–20.

Table 1. The ARLIS/NA *Art Information Competencies* for novice and expert learners in art history mapped to the six threshold concepts from the ACRL *Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education*. Author's Note: The process of mapping the *Art Information Competencies* to the *Framework* was not always intuitive. In some cases, the information competency seemed to apply to more than one threshold concept. For the purposes of creating the chart, the author selected the threshold concept that, in their opinion, best fit the competency as a whole.

ARLIS/NA <i>Art Information Competencies</i> – Art History, Novice Learners	ARLIS/NA <i>Art Information Competencies</i> – Art History, Expert Learners	ACRL <i>Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education</i>
<p>Learners are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Differentiate between primary and secondary sources, recognizing the merits of both scholarly and popular forms of art historical writing • Incorporate scholarship in related disciplines that inform art historical research including history, archaeology, anthropology, religion, and philosophy <p>Learners are aware of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key disciplinary resources, offered in a variety of formats, that may be authoritative tools for beginning research 	<p>Learners are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize the field's authorities and be able to critically read and interpret these authorities with an awareness of disciplinary, historical, cultural constructions of expertise <p>Learners are aware of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Established art historical interpretations, marginalized voices in the discipline, and historical shifts and gaps in both art history education and scholarship • The development of their own perspectives on art historical topics and how those perspectives may influence interpretation 	<p>Authority is Constructed and Contextual</p> <p>Information resources reflect their creators' expertise and credibility, and are evaluated based on the information need and the context in which the information will be used. Authority is constructed in that various communities may recognize different types of authority. It is contextual in that the information need may help to determine the level of authority required.</p>
<p>Learners are aware of:</p> <p>Different formats and purposes of books including exhibition catalogs, museum collection catalogs, artist monographs, and catalogues raisonnés</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Information Creation as a Process</p> <p>Information in any format is produced to convey a message and is shared via a selected delivery method. The iterative processes of researching, creating, revising, and disseminating information vary, and the resulting product reflects these differences.</p>

Table 1. *Continued*

ARLIS/NA <i>Art Information Competencies – Art History, Novice Learners</i>	ARLIS/NA <i>Art Information Competencies – Art History, Expert Learners</i>	ACRL <i>Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education</i>
<p>Learners are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effectively observe, describe, and analyze visual material and mindfully integrate and attribute visual material throughout their research processes and outputs • Employ research management tools and techniques to assist in concept mapping, tracking citations, attributing ideas, and avoiding plagiarism <p>Learners are aware of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How the internet and digital cultural heritage have made art history accessible to different audiences 	<p>Learners are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use specialized sources such as provenance records and auction catalogs to determine authenticity and perceived monetary and cultural worth of artworks • Identify different forms of access and copyright for text and visual material, such as public domain, open access, and creative commons <p>Learners are aware of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethical and legal issues regarding intellectual property and fair use of visual material 	<p>Information Has Value</p> <p>Information possesses several dimensions of value, including as a commodity, as a means of education, as a means to influence, and as a means of negotiating and understanding the world. Legal and socioeconomic interests influence information production and dissemination.</p>
<p>Learners are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess sources of visual material and choose relevant artworks and images based on need • Develop a research topic appropriate for the anticipated output and timeframe, then summarize and analyze interpretations and ideas of art historians <p>Learners are aware of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Materials and processes used to create the artworks relevant to their research inquiry and how they may inform interpretation of the works 	<p>Learners are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate curiosity and adaptability in conducting textual and visual research <p>Learners are aware of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advanced research management tools and techniques to assist with synthesizing information and looking for potential gaps in art historical scholarship 	<p>Research as Inquiry</p> <p>Research is iterative and depends upon asking increasingly complex or new questions whose answers in turn develop additional questions or lines of inquiry in any field.</p>

Table 1. *Continued*

ARLIS/NA <i>Art Information Competencies – Art History, Novice Learners</i>	ARLIS/NA <i>Art Information Competencies – Art History, Expert Learners</i>	ACRL <i>Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education</i>
N/A	<p>Learners are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete a literature review, synthesizing findings and independently drawing conclusions • Develop digital proficiencies for information management, presentation and sharing of ideas and scholarship <p>Learners are aware of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How they are contributing to the discipline through their scholarly output and practices • New uses of multimedia for presenting scholarship to a variety of audiences and how the format of that scholarship may impact its perceived value • How to engage in the current professional conversation and collaborate with peers through relevant associations and organizations 	<p>Scholarship as Conversation</p> <p>Communities of scholars, researchers, or professionals engage in sustained discourse with new insights and discoveries occurring over time as a result of varied perspectives and interpretations.</p>
<p>Learners are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct searches using disciplinary vocabulary and browse call number ranges to become familiar with organizational structures of art history <p>Learners are aware of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How information structures and processes, such as Library of Congress subject headings and peer-review, assign value to information • Methods of access to visual material including physical objects, print image reproductions, digital images, and image repositories 	<p>Learners are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access research support services and collections beyond their local institutions and libraries, including archives, special collections, and museum libraries • Find relevant information to aid in career development 	<p>Searching as Strategies Exploration</p> <p>Searching for information is often nonlinear and iterative, requiring the evaluation of a range of information sources and the mental flexibility to pursue alternate avenues as new understanding develops.</p>

Table 2. The number of instances in which the ARLIS/NA *Art Information Competencies* for novice and expert learners in art history were mapped to the six threshold concepts from the ACRL *Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education*.

ARLIS/NA <i>Art Information Competencies</i> – Art History, Novice Learners	ARLIS/NA <i>Art Information Competencies</i> – Art History, Expert Learners	ACRL <i>Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education</i>
3	3	Authority is Constructed and Contextual
1	0	Information Creation as a Process
3	3	Information Has Value
3	2	Research as Inquiry
0	5	Scholarship as Conversation
3	2	Searching as Strategic Exploration

art, architecture, and design faculty who are invested in the research and creative processes of their students. Wikipedia is an ideal platform to facilitate the research process because librarians can teach and reinforce both general and art-specific research concepts across the spectrum by guiding students through the editing process. Possibilities range from low-stakes additions to significant contributions. Students not only develop discipline-specific research skills but are tasked with critically evaluating Wikipedia articles to identify gaps and address uneven attention to underrepresented topics. By editing Wikipedia, students participate in a crowd-sourced effort to make the world’s most read encyclopedia more accurate, representative, and complete.

Understandably, librarians who are interested in using Wikipedia to teach the *Art Information Competencies* may be apprehensive about the feasibility of doing so in one-shot instruction sessions. In these scenarios, librarians may have only one opportunity to work face-to-face with an entire class. In 2014, John Thomas Oliver wrote about his success editing Wikipedia in one-shot instruction sessions. He refers to this practice as an “edit-sprint,” or editing Wikipedia within the one-shot session as a pedagogical tool for learning the research process.⁵⁰ Table 3 presents suggested activities, applicable to one-shot classroom sessions, that are linked to concepts from the *Framework* and the *Art Information Competencies* for novice and expert learners in art history. While it will not be feasible to complete all of the activities listed in a single class session, it is possible to undertake one or two activities, depending on the focus of the class. If students are just getting started with their research, they can evaluate the Wikipedia article on their topic of interest and think critically about areas of further investigation. Furthermore, students can use keywords generated from the article, find sources in the library catalog or databases, and add these works to the article’s references.

50. John Thomas Oliver, “One-Shot Wikipedia: An Edit-Sprint toward Information Literacy,” *Reference Services Review* 43, no. 1 (2015): 82.

Table 3. Suggested classroom activities mapped to the ACRL *Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education* and ARLIS/NA *Art Information Competencies* for novice and expert learners in art history. Most activities are applicable to one-shot instruction sessions.

Activity	Impact	ACRL <i>Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education</i>	ARLIS/NA <i>Art Information Competencies—Art History</i>
Students analyze existing citations on Wikipedia articles for authority and credibility	Students differentiate between primary and secondary sources as well as scholarly and popular sources	Authority is Constructed and Contextual	Novice learners are able to: Differentiate between primary and secondary sources, recognizing the merits of both scholarly and popular forms of art historical writing
Students explore the backend of Wikipedia, including talk pages and the edit and view history tabs	Students learn how information is created and organized in an open source encyclopedia	Information Creation as a Process	*Novice learners are aware of: Different formats and purposes of books including exhibition catalogs, museum collection catalogs, artist monographs, and catalogues raisonnés
Students search for information in the library catalog and databases and add references to articles	Students help other users find scholarly material about that topic	Information Has Value	Novice learners are able to: Employ research management tools and techniques to assist in concept mapping, tracking citations, attributing ideas, and avoiding plagiarism
Students upload new media to Wikimedia Commons	Students help users discover visual material for analysis and interpretation	Information Has Value	Novice learners are able to: Effectively observe, describe, and analyze visual material and mindfully integrate and attribute visual material throughout their research processes and outputs

Table 3. *Continued*

Activity	Impact	ACRL Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education	ARLIS/NA Art Information Competencies—Art History
Students read over a Wikipedia article and identify gaps or areas for improvement and then—if time allows—make those edits	Students critically evaluate articles for knowledge gaps and opportunities for further study	Research as Inquiry	** Expert learners are aware of: Advanced research management tools and techniques to assist with synthesizing information and looking for potential gaps in art historical scholarship
Students use the talk pages to communicate with fellow editors about the article's content	Students give and receive feedback on edits and participate in the ongoing conversation	Scholarship as Conversation	Expert learners are aware of: How to engage in the current professional conversation and collaborate with peers through relevant associations and organizations
Students create or expand an existing article	Students present their research to a general audience	Scholarship as Conversation	Expert learners are aware of: New uses of multimedia for presenting scholarship to a variety of audiences and how the format of that scholarship may impact its perceived value
Students add links to other articles on Wikipedia	Students help users find additional information related to the article topic	Searching as Strategic Exploration	*** Novice learners are able to: Conduct searches using disciplinary vocabulary and browse call number ranges to become familiar with organizational structures of art history

* The author interprets this competency to include encyclopedias and other background sources.

** Though Wikipedia is not an advanced research management tool, it is useful for practicing the process of synthesizing information and looking for potential gaps.

*** Linking to other Wikipedia articles can help researchers identify disciplinary vocabulary and related art history concepts.

One benefit of using Wikipedia in the classroom is the integrated assessment. Wikipedia has built-in features that allow librarians to easily assess the impact of teaching and learning in library instruction sessions. Since Wikipedia is open source, every edit is saved and accessible, even if the article was later modified. Using the Wiki Education interface, librarians can create a dashboard to track and analyze students' contributions, including the articles edited, word count, and total number of edits.⁵¹ The quality of the edits can be analyzed using a rubric provided by Wiki Education.⁵²

CONCLUSION

When interviewed by *The Oxford Spokesman* on March 22, 2018, about the 2018 Art+Feminism Wikipedia Edit-a-thon at Oxford College Library, the author emphasized the significance of the event for student researchers: "Wikipedia's gender gap is well-documented: a 2011 study showed less than 13 percent of Wikipedia contributors are female. The lack of female participation skews the content and creates an alarming absence in the world's most used encyclopedia. As a teaching librarian, it is especially rewarding to help students make their research accessible to the world."⁵³ The author still believes in the power of students editing Wikipedia not only to learn and reinforce the research concepts in the *Art Information Competencies*, but also to bridge the gap between novice and expert learners and disseminate discipline-specific research to a public audience. Librarians can utilize Wikipedia as a teaching tool to build students' art history information competencies and empower them as researchers and contributors to the conversation. Let's edit!

51. Wiki Education, "My Dashboard."

52. Helaine Blumental, "Tips for Grading a Wikipedia Assignment," Wiki Education, November 15, 2017, <https://wikiedu.org/blog/2017/11/15/tips-for-grading-a-wikipedia-assignment/>.

53. Kreutz, "Closing the Wikipedia Gender Gap."